

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 09861 291132Z
ACTION SS-25

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SUBJECT: CTB NEGOTIATIONS: NSS WORKING GROUP, JUNE 28, 1978

CTB MESSAGE NO. 254

1. SUMMARY: AT NSS WORKING GROUP ON JUNE 28, ROMNEY (US) DESCRIBED ASSUMPTIONS ON NOISE LEVELS AT NSS SITES THAT UNDERLAY US DEL PROPOSALS ON NSS NUMBER AND LOCATIONS. NOVIKOV AND BASHILOV (USSR) ASKED SEVERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES USED TO MAKE NOISE MEASUREMENTS IN US, AND TARASOV (USSR) REPEATED STANDARD SOVDEL LINE DOUBTING NEED FOR NSS SINCE NO PARTY INTENDED TO VIOLATE TREATY. AFTER MEETING, TARASOV ASKED FINCH (US) ABOUT CAPABILITIES OF NETWORK PROPOSED BY THE US DEL. END SUMMARY.

2. TARASOV OPENED MEETING BY ASKING WHETHER US HAD ADDITIONAL MATERIAL TO PRESENT ON NSS NETWORK PROPOSAL. FINCH INDICATED THAT US HAD FURTHER INFORMATION ON NOISE ASSUMPTIONS, AND ASKED ROMNEY TO MAKE PRESENTATION. ROMNEY THEN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 GENEVA 09861 291132Z

DESCRIBED HOW NOISE ASSUMPTIONS FOR SOVIET NSS SITES HAD BEEN GENERATED BY COMPARING THEM TO ANALOGOUS REGIONS IN US WHERE NOISE MEASUREMENTS HAD BEEN MADE. HE INDICATED US NOISE ASSUMPTIONS AT EACH OF 15 PROPOSED NSS SITES AND PROVIDED RATIONALE FOR ASSUMPTIONS, AND DESCRIBED US METHOD OF MEASURING SHORT-PERIOD AND LONG-PERIOD NOISE.

3. NOVIKOV AND BASHILOV ASKED SEVERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES USED TO MAKE THE NOISE MEASUREMENTS IN THE US, INCLUDING WHETHER PERMANENT OR PORTABLE INSTRUMENTS HAD BEEN USED, HOW DATA WAS ANALYZED, AND WHAT SORTS OF NOISE MEASUREMENTS HAD BEEN TAKEN AT BOREHOLE DEPTH. TARASOV NOTED THAT HE COULD NOT EXPRESS ANY OBJECTIONS TO THE SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO NSS, BUT PERSONALLY HAD DOUBTS ABOUT INCLUDING NSS IN TREATY SINCE THE BASIC APPROACH OF ALL PARTIES WAS NOT TO VIOLATE THE TREATY. AS ILLUSTRATION OF HIS GENERAL DOUBTS, HE NOTED THAT THE FIRST SITE PROPOSED BY THE US (NAL'CHIK) WAS A POPULAR RESORT AREA WHERE MILLIONS SPENT THEIR VACATION, AND IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO IMAGINE THAT ANYONE WOULD CARRY OUT A COVERT UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR EXPLOSION IN THAT AREA. ROMNEY EXPLAINED THAT NAL'CHIK HAD BEEN SELECTED NOT BECAUSE ANYONE THOUGHT A TEST MIGHT OCCUR THERE BUT BECAUSE IT WAS AN EXCELLENT SITE TO DETECT SEISMIC SIGNALS AT GREAT DISTANCES.

4. FINCH (US) NOTED THAT, AS STATED IN JUNE 27 PLENARY STATEMENT, OUR OBJECTIVE WAS TO ACHIEVE NSS NETWORK GENERALLY CONFORMING TO NOISE LEVELS ROMNEY HAD PRESENTED. THIS INDICATION OF NOISE LEVELS US HAD IN MIND SHOULD CLARIFY OPERATION OF SITE SELECTION PROCEDURE IN OUR MAY 8 WORKING PAPER, WHICH REFERRED TO "NOISE LEVELS WHICH THE PARTIES WOULD AGREE WERE ACCEPTABLE." HE HOPED THAT THIS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 GENEVA 09861 291132Z

CLARIFICATION WOULD FACILITATE DELS REACHING AGREEMENT ON SITE SELECTION PROCEDURES.

5. IN INFORMAL DISCUSSION FOLLOWING MEETING, TARASOV ASKED FINCH WHETHER US HAD ESTIMATE OF PERFORMANCE OF PROPOSED NSS NETWORK. FINCH RESPONDED THAT JUDGING PERFORMANCE OF NETWORK IN ADVANCE WAS DIFFICULT, AS IT DEPENDED ON SUCCESS IN FINDING SITES AS QUIET AS THOSE WE HAD ASSUMED, AND ON OTHER FACTORS SUCH AS PROPAGATION OF SEISMIC SIGNALS. SOVIET EXPERTS WERE IN BETTER POSITION THAN US EXPERTS TO KNOW THESE FACTORS. FINCH ALSO OBSERVED THAT NSS COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED IN ISOLATION FROM OTHER VERIFICATION SYSTEMS. OBJECTIVE WAS TO ACHIEVE INCREASED CONFIDENCE IN COMPLIANCE, WHICH WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO STABLE TREATY REGIME. THIS WOULD DEPEND ON COMBINATION OF NSS AND OTHER VERIFICATION SYSTEMS. ROMNEY RESPONDED ALONG SIMILAR LINE TO QUESTION FROM NOVIKOV (USSR) ON DETECTION THRESHOLD OF PROPOSED NSS NETWORK. JOHNSON

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